



Asosiasi Buruh Migran Indonesia di Hong Kong

(Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong)

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Submission to the Panel on Manpower of the HK Legislative Council

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1. Indonesian migrant workers comprise more than 40% of the total foreign domestic workers population in Hong Kong. They are recruited from far flung villages or towns of the country based on the promise that working in Hong Kong can alleviate themselves and their families from abject poverty and hunger.
2. Most of them have no tertiary education and some of them are below 21 years old. The recommended age in Indonesia for overseas domestic work is 24.
3. They undergo training without pay for 3 to 6 months doing household chores and learning Cantonese lessons in order to qualify to work in Hong Kong. During the training period, they are not allowed to go out from the training house or call their families and are taught to be submissive to the recruitment agencies and their prospective employers.
4. Under this condition Indonesian migrant workers are vulnerable to many forms of abuse and to excessive charges or overcharging by recruitment agencies.
5. Upon arrival in Hong Kong, newly recruited Indonesian migrant workers are immediately handed over to Hong Kong based counterpart agency of the Indonesian recruitment agency. Within a few days Indonesian migrant worker will be taken to a financing agency, forcing her to take a loan usually amounting to HK \$21,000 payable within 7 months at HK \$3,000 per month.
6. Minus HK\$3,000 as monthly payment to the so-called loan, how can an Indonesian migrant worker live in Hong Kong decently if she's only earning HK\$920 per month for seven months? How can she help her family at her home country with such meager income?
6. To make the unscrupulous loan legally binding, Indonesian migrant workers are forced to sign an agreement that they are fully aware of that loan and is willing to pay such loan within an agreed period. This is true for the newly arrived Indonesian domestic workers.
7. These practices of Indonesian recruitment agencies in connivance with Hong Kong based recruitment agencies are illegal and immoral acts against Indonesian migrant workers. It is a clear violation of the existing HK policy that says that agencies can only charge a one-time payment of 10% of the minimum allowable wage (MAW) as placement fee.
8. Making unscrupulous loan legal is not the only problem that Indonesian migrant workers are facing nowadays while working in Hong Kong. As advised by their recruitment agency and agreed upon by their employers, Indonesian migrant workers are paid way below the minimum allowable wage (usually HK \$2,000).

9. In this regard the Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (ATKI or Association Indonesian Migrant Workers) would like to recommend for the Legislative Council, through the Panel of Manpower to:

A. Make a thorough review on the effectiveness of policy governing the recruitment of foreign domestic workers here in Hong Kong particularly in terms of placement fee. Take necessary actions against recruitment agencies found to be violating the existing policy.

B. Clearly put into HK policy that overcharging and dubious loans made by recruitment agency for FDWs is another form of trafficking in person and/ or labor trafficking.

C. Establish cooperative relations with migrant organizations and NGOs working with migrants to address overcharging including information sharing and making financial, technical and logistical resources available to assist migrant groups and NGOs in their work against overcharging of private recruitment agencies.

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